



March 27, 2015

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Donald R. Duckworth
Executive Director

The Honorable Carol Liu
California State Senate, 21st District
State Capitol, Room 5097
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Opposition to SB 608 – Right to Rest Act

Dear Senator Liu:

On behalf of the Westchester Town Center Business Improvement District (BID) and our more than 500 property and business owners, we want to express our opposition to State Senate Bill 608, the Right to Rest Act.

SB 608 aims to protect people who are homeless from citations and imprisonment resulting from resting, sharing food or practicing religion in public, however we fear this proposal is mis-guided approach. With the number of homeless increasing in California, such a law only incentivizes further homeless activity in California cities, rather than addressing the real issue: how best to eradicate homelessness altogether.

Furthermore, we oppose this bill because it permits activities that would be highly subject to interpretation, making enforcement more challenging for a police force and BID agents already beset with transient-related complaints. Although well-intentioned, SB 608 makes it harder for these enforcement entities to protect public safety and quality of life in our neighborhoods.

As a BID in the City of Los Angeles, we work tirelessly to make the region a desirable place to visit, work and live. While we would support legislation that helps the homeless find new shelter and employment opportunities, we are highly skeptical of any law that encourages further homeless activity where businesses, residents, and tourists spend much of their time moving to and from their destinations.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our requests. We believe there are better ways to care for our State's homeless population, and we hope our comments help inform an alternative proposal that addresses this important issue.

Sincerely,

Donald R. Duckworth
Executive Director

C: Board of Directors